THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

"*And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost; and if they endure unto the end they shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the Lamb; and whoso shall publish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be.*" BOOK OF MORMON, 1 NEPHI 13: 37.

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A TESTIMONY TO ALL THE WORLD*

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

IT IS EVER a pleasure to me, at home or abroad, whenever opportunity presents itself, to bear witness to the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the plan of life and salvation. I rejoice in the knowledge of the Gospel, in having had the privilege of partaking of the fruits of the Gospel, and in knowing beyond the shadow of a doubt regarding the divinity of the mission of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I know of nothing that brings greater joy to the human heart than being permitted to testify of the divine mission of Jesus Christ, and of the divine mission, under the direction of the Saviour, of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

A WONDERFUL MESSAGE

We are celebrating the birth of the Saviour on the date that is accepted by the world to-day. Two days ago we were celebrating the birthday of Joseph Smith, to whom Jesus Christ saw fit to deliver a message, Joseph being a young boy at the time, and the Saviour promised him that he should be an instrument in the hands of God of again establishing upon the earth the true Church of Christ. The Saviour told that boy, in answer to a simple question, that he should join none of the various religious

*Address delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah, U.S.A., Christmas Day, December 25th, 1927.

denominations, because they had gone astray, and they were teaching the doctrines of men. We have a most wonderful message to deliver to the world; namely, that God has again spoken from the heavens, that His Son Jesus Christ has revealed Himself in our day, and that by His own voice He has given commandment.

HE LIVES!

We rejoice in being able to testify that we do know by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to us that the words contained in the "Vision" given to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon are true; namely:

And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God.

THERE IS NO DOUBT

We have absolutely no doubt in our minds that Jesus Christ did appear to Oliver Cowdery and to Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple, that He did accept of the Temple, and that He did bless them. We have no doubt that the many revelations received by Joseph Smith, wherein special commandments were given to some of the early Apostles in this Church, were from the Lord. There is no doubt in the minds of the Latter-day Saints that to-day we are enjoying the fruits of the Gospel, through obedience to the commandments of the Lord, in fulfilment of the promise that those who would do the will of the Father should know of the Gospel, whether it was of God or of man. And by the hundreds of thousands the Latter-day Saints are able to bear this witness. We rejoice in it.

JESUS IS THE CHRIST—HE SPOKE TO JOSEPH SMITH

I add my testimony to that of those who have spoken, and bear witness to every man and woman within the sound of my voice, whether they be listening in—as I know that hundreds and even thousands do listen to the radio sermons—that I do know, by the revelations of the Spirit of the living God to me, that Jesus is the Christ, the Redeemer of the world, and that He did deliver a message to Joseph Smith. I know also that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the true and living God, and that every gift, grace, endowment and privilege that was enjoyed in early days by the Saints of God when the Saviour was upon the earth, and after His crucifixion, is enjoyed to-day by the Latter-day Saints. May God aid me and you and all who are listening, who have a knowledge of the Gospel, to live it, that our lives may proclaim it to

those with whom we come in contact, is my prayer and desire, and I ask it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Saviour. Amen.

THE SOWER, THE SEED AND THE SOIL*

ELDER RULON S. WELLS
OF THE FIRST COUNCIL OF SEVENTY

NOT VERY MANY YEARS AGO I had the pleasure of attending the Canadian Quarterly Conferences in company with Elder John A. Widtsoe. Previous to our conferences Dr. Widtsoe had been visiting the Northwest, delivering addresses on agriculture, irrigation, reclamation, dry-farming and kindred subjects, and there were people, including many not of our faith, living in outlying districts, who desired to hear him, for his fame as an agriculturist had gone before him. Accordingly a meeting was arranged and some of the visitors at the Alberta Conference, including myself, were also in attendance. He gave a most excellent talk. I have never listened to one where I received so much information regarding the principles of agriculture. He stated that there were five essentials to successful farming: First, soil—there must be soil. Second, there must be air. Third, there must be seed. Fourth, there must be water; and fifth, there must be sunshine. He went on explaining how it was necessary to break up the soil, to pulverize it in order that the air may get in, that it may be thoroughly aerated, fairly filled with atmosphere. He went on to show how it was necessary that seed should be planted in the soil thus prepared. He continued to show that it was necessary that water should be applied if that seed is to grow, and that the sun must shine upon it before it can yield a harvest. He made it much more complete than I would be able to do here; but what surprised me most was that at the close of his remarks he said: "Now, before we dismiss this meeting I would like to hear from my companion, Mr. Wells, who is a practical farmer."

A PRACTICAL FARMER

Well, I thought that was rather a strange introduction to give to me, as I had never held a plow in my hand in all my life. I had no horny hands of toil, and my muscles were soft and had not become hardened to that kind of work; nevertheless, I responded to the invitation, and as I did so it came to me that perhaps after

*From an address delivered at the third session of the Ninety-eighth Semi-annual Conference, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah, U.S.A., October 8th, 1927.

all Dr. Widtsoe was right, and that I was indeed a practical farmer, but the soil that I have been endeavouring to cultivate is the soil of the human heart. It is sometimes an unwieldy soil, and full of hardness. It needs to be broken up and harrowed; it needs to be pulverized and softened before it is prepared to receive the seed. The seed that I have been planting has been the seed of faith. We do not call it farming; we call it sowing the seeds of faith—faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that men shall believe that He is indeed the Son of God who was chosen before the foundations of this earth were laid, to create it and redeem it; for, let it be remembered, there was a great council in Heaven, when the great plan of life and salvation was proclaimed among the children of God before this world was, "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy"; and, in order to carry out the Lord's plan, the question arose: "Whom shall I send?" There was one like unto the Son of Man who arose and said: "Here am I, send me. Thy will be done and the glory be thine forever." This was the Firstborn, even Jehovah, who became the Only Begotten of the Father, and was known as Jesus Christ in the flesh. I have been teaching men to have faith in Him who came into this world, created and peopled it with the children of God, that they may have life in this world—this natural world where we should have the experience of an earth-life—to have faith in Him who not only created the world, but who should redeem the world, who should redeem mankind from the fall which was to ensue, thus giving us the opportunity to prove whether we, with a knowledge of good or evil and in the exercise of our free agency, would do all things whatsoever the Lord our God should command, to have faith in Him by whose almighty power mankind should be redeemed from death and the grave.

WHOM TO FOLLOW

But there was another who arose in that primeval council who rejected that plan and led many away from God through his deception and insidious sophistries, and he said: "Here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; therefore give me thine honor." And God said: I will send the first; and Satan, for it was he who spoke thus, became angry and was cast out of heaven and with him fell one-third of the hosts of heaven. The one all important thing, then, is to teach men to have faith in Him whom God sent, and reject the other whom God cast out of heaven. The first was a plan of freedom wherein men should exercise their own volition; the other was one of compulsion and eventual subjection to the power of evil. To teach this fundamental truth has been the good seed that I have always endeavoured to plant in the

hearts of men, in this ofttimes unwieldly, sour and hardened, but withal, most prolific and fertile soil.

WEEDS

But other seeds were constantly being planted in this receptive soil—evil seeds. That war begun in heaven continued here on earth. The evil hand that led so many away from God in that primeval conflict, with his evil followers, continues here to lead mankind astray by planting evil seeds, the seeds of hate, of greed, of avarice and lust, and these grow, too, along with the good seed. These are the weeds, the thistles and the thorns, hence the good farmer will pull them out or cut them down, lest they overrun the good and hinder its growth. This we call repentance from sin or casting the devils out.

THE WATER

Then comes the need for water, another essential in successful farming. So we preach not only faith and repentance but also baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, for the extinction of all the evil effects of sin, that the hearts and souls of men may be washed clean in the blood of the Lamb of God, by being buried with Him by baptism unto His death, and coming forth from that watery grave in the likeness of His glorious resurrection.

SUNSHINE

Now let in the sunshine of God's Holy Spirit. How can the garden grow in darkness? How can the trees blossom and produce their luscious fruit? Or how can the fields grow or ripen into golden harvest, unless the sun shall shine upon them? How can we know or understand the things of God without the light of His Holy Spirit? And yet, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Hence, there is need to obtain the gift of the Holy Ghost, which in the Gospel of our Lord is bestowed upon repentant and baptized believers by the laying on of hands.

SYMBOLS OF THINGS ETERNAL

These are the essentials in this practical farming that has engaged so many years of my life. There appear to be two kinds of farming, and both are practical. How greatly and grandly do they resemble each other! I think it was Goethe, the great German Poet, who said: *Alles vergaengliche is nur ein Gleichniss*—All things temporal are but symbols of things eternal.

And now, Brother Widtsoe, so well informed in the science of agriculture—the reclamation of the waste lands of the desert—has also had a still greater experience as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ in the cultivation of human hearts, in planting the seeds of faith, not only by word of mouth, but also by his convincing pen

in this still wider field of human welfare, by applying, in their spiritual form, these same essentials of practical and successful farming.

May the Lord bless him in his ministry abroad. And, as he shall travel in the various missions of Europe, may he be able to speak forth the words of eternal life to every nation, kindred, tongue and people wheresoever he shall go, even to the convincing of the honest in heart, and in language that they can understand. This is my humble prayer and sincere wish for Brother Widtsoe, and I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

FATHER OF ALL! in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

. . . .

Thou gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill,
And binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heaven pursue.

What blessings Thy free bounty gives
Let me not cast away!
For God is paid when man receives!
To enjoy is to obey.

. . . .

Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At aught Thy wisdom has denied,
Or aught Thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quickened by Thy breath;
Oh, lead me wheresoe'er I go,
Through this day's life or death.

This day, be bread and peace my lot;
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not,
And let Thy will be done.

ALEXANDER POPE

STATISTICAL REPORT OF THE BRITISH MISSION

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1927

Districts	Missionaries Dec. 31, 1927					Local Priesthood					Members	Children under 8 years old	Total Number of Souls	Baptized	Excommunicated	Died	Answered Calls While Tracting	Invitations in While Tracting	Gospel Conversations	Tracts Distributed	Pamphlets Distributed	Copies of Book of Mormon Distributed	Other Books Distributed	Meetings Held by Missionaries	Total Hours Work
	Apostle	H. Priests	Seventies	Elders	Women	H. Priests	Elders	Priests	Teachers	Deacons															
Birmingham			1	11			19	24	7	36	491	75	652	13		4	40761	825	12705	112206	12504	234	136	471	34360
Bristol				8			4	5	1	4	99	24	137	9	1		27573	166	7476	70824	5500	29	109	302	22227
Hull			1	7			7	6	4	18	202	41	278	11		4	46542	194	6805	131672	3054	46	76	496	28398
Irish Free State			1				8	1		6	39	13	67	5			1152		607	3625	103	4	37	156	3027
Leeds			1	11			13	17	15	42	463	61	611	9		14	18291	208	7086	107248	8158	46	32	253	27831
Liverpool			1	11			9	27	10	38	507	44	635	16		3	28288	300	9124	101661	4313	228	103	572	38449
London			3	10		1	33	24	10	40	492	64	664	8		10	15557	151	5763	113165	2455	116	136	511	36606
Manchester				12			17	20	5	12	311	38	403	7		6	26132	564	11427	127182	5466	242	254	452	40960
Newcastle			2	10			12	27	14	38	429	67	587	14		12	25057	178	4346	98772	3544	52	92	598	40008
Norwich		1	2	7	1		6	10	3	8	125	29	181	7		4	34300	455	11575	85906	6683	50	99	123	28502
Nottingham			1	10			25	19	16	30	335	63	488	11		8	19402	228	9883	89987	5360	185	127	366	31850
Scottish			3	6			7	17	5	17	206	37	289	12		6	37975	174	8111	133530	8593	74	137	648	29087
Sheffield			2	8			15	18	7	27	258	27	388	13		6	27081	467	10439	128796	7992	116	150	270	29789
Ulster			2	3			3	3	3	5	112	11	137	20		2	5413	269	5173	35635	3565	91	72	176	15810
Welsh			1	5			6	9	1	6	98	15	135	16		2	18144	681	7098	65667	2955	72	107	190	24140
Liverpool Office	1			3	1																				
Totals	1	1	21	122	2	1	184	227	101	327	4167	609	5652	171	1	81	371668	4860	117618	1405876	80245	1585	1667	5584	431044

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1928

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT NIBLEY—THE LORD'S SERVANT

President Charles W. Nibley was born February 5th, 1849. The Saints everywhere rejoice that he is hale, hearty and full of service on the anniversary of his birth which occurs this week. The *Star* presents its congratulations and the earnest wish that this constant defender of the truth may long be "o'er a' the ills of life victorious."

He was born into the meager conditions of the coal mines of Scotland; to-day he is a dominating influence in the greatest industrial enterprises of Western America. He gleaned grain and tended sheep when a lad in Utah; now, a ripened man, he furnishes happy and profitable employment to thousands. His life is as a romance, built upon the wise use, in the affairs of men, of a clear and active mind. Merchant, railroad builder, lumber producer, sugar manufacturer and colonizer—he has prospered in all that he has undertaken.

"I have been blessed of the Lord," he would say; for to President Nibley all good gifts come from God. Indeed, his life's labours and successes have been threaded upon an unwavering faith in the Lord. The boy in the grainfield looked upward for help; and the ripened man reaches out with even greater faith to God. He has always stood ready to serve in the great latter-day work of restoration—the work he loves above all else. The barefoot boy has found himself a missionary, in a Stake Presidency, the Presiding Bishop, and in the Presidency of the Church. The privilege to render service in the Church he holds to be more than any material success. Should we ask him, he would declare his greatest possession to be the knowledge of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as restored through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Keen business man, student of literature and history, wise spiritual leader, companionable friend, devoted husband and father—all this is President Nibley; but more than all else, he loves God and tries with all his might to obey His commandments. We can speak no higher praise. He knows, in the words of his favourite poet, that "They never sought in vain, who sought the Lord."—W.

PRESIDENT GRANT'S INTEREST IN TEMPLE WORK

It is encouraging to learn from an article in the *Deseret News*

of January 6th, 1928, that President Heber J. Grant goes to the Temple to work for his dead at least once a week, and that he is actively concerned with the gathering of his genealogy. It is an example that all should follow.

The Gospel is for the whole human family. Whether living or dead, all must be given the opportunity of hearing and accepting the eternal plan of salvation. The ordinances of the Gospel are performed by proxy for the dead. Such sacred work is done in the holy Temples. The principle of salvation for the dead is among the most glorious in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Comfort and strength come to those who devote some of their time to this work.

In this land, where as yet there are no Temples, the Saints meet the obligation of remembering their dead by searching out their genealogies. The names obtained, properly prepared, are sent on to the Temples, where ordinances for the dead are performed. The work is highly important, for temple work can be done only for those concerning whom we have proper information. Such genealogical activity is acceptable to the Lord, and brings much joy to those who engage in it.

The above mentioned article closes with significant words:

> The time is hastening when these Temples that we have will be crowded night and day, and others builded on other parts of this continent and perhaps in other nations and climes. For the President of this Church to take up the labour he is doing, both in going to the Temple and in securing further genealogical information for his own family, should inspire the leading men of the Church, as well as leading men in the stakes and wards of the Church, to follow his example, as the strongest of all preaching is that of example.

Let the Saints of the European Mission take new heart from the example set by our prophet and leader, and renew their efforts to gather and assemble the records of their dead for use in the Temples of the Lord.—W.

THE STORM-TOSSED CRANE

We were half way across the Atlantic Ocean. A flock of sea-gulls followed us by day, and roosted in the rigging by night. On the morning of the fifth day out a newcomer was among them—grey-brown, long-winged, larger than the gulls, with long, thin legs laid under the body and projecting beyond the tail feathers. He flew with an effort. At times he would descend toward the water as if ready to rest upon it; then with redoubled effort he would raise himself and strive to keep up with the ship.

The strange bird became the object of attention. What manner of bird was he? Where did he come from? Why did he fly so

wearily? Spy-glasses were brought out; and once he almost overtook the ship, so that we could see him quite clearly with the naked eye. We soon came to the conclusion that it was a crane driven from its shorelands over the ocean by the terrific storm of the week before.

Then we became more interested than ever. Cranes are wading birds—hence their long legs. To rise into flight easily their feet must touch solid ground. Not so with the sea-gull. It may float upon the water and rise into flight directly from the water. A crane, floating on the water, would find it difficult to lift itself into flight; but would tend to remain afloat until it reached some shallow place where its feet could touch bottom, when it could lift itself into flight. What would happen to the crane? Would he weary unto desperation, settle upon the water, there to remain in mid-Atlantic until destroyed; or would he save himself by attempting a landing upon the ship?

The day wore on and the weariness of the crane became more apparent. The bird's predicament held passengers and crew in tense suspense. Finally, toward the middle of the afternoon, when the sun was descending rapidly, the crane determined upon a last effort to save himself. His body lengthened in fierce desire; the wings beat in violent regularity; every muscle was strained. It was a sight to stir the soul. Nearer and nearer he came to the ship, reached it, hovered over it, flew almost to the first mast, and then dropped heavily to the deck. He had found something solid on which to stand! His was the possibility of again taking flight, to pursue in some safer place the method of life ordained by nature for the kingdom of cranes. Passengers and crew rejoiced that the bird had made a wise decision and had summoned sufficient energy to escape the dreary end that would have come if he had been enticed into the easier rest on the water. He was put into a cage carefully, fed some choice morsels, and on the last day, when land was in sight, released for an easy flight to the shore, where stately cranes wade upon solid ground.

The spiritual lesson is obvious: Driven by winds of false doctrine, superstition and disobedience, humanity has settled into the ocean of error. There it drifts, finding it difficult or impossible to rise in orderly flight to the haven of happiness. Without the solid truth beneath its feet it cannot move itself into the dominion of full joy. Once in a while a brave soul, recognizing the dangerous condition, and unwilling to drift to the end of life, though it be in ease, on the accumulated and easily held opinions of men, bends every energy to find truth. When such an earnest seeker discovers truth, though it be only a fragment, like unto a ship in mid-ocean, he sets out heroically to win that truth for himself, feeling secure that with one truth as a foundation, he may more certainly win another truth, until he shall at last enter into the kingdom of truth with its unspeakable joy. If men would hold

truth in higher and man-made opinions in lesser regard, the problems of the world would at once be solved. If men would hunger for truth, as the crane for the solid ground, the way to happiness would be found by the uneasy world.

Scarcely had the boat landed before the parable of the Storm-tossed Crane was realized in fact. One of the immigration officials, noting that the vessel carried a party committed to a religious philosophy that claimed to be the Gospel of Jesus Christ and that spoke with authority, almost forgot his official duties to ask with eagerness about the truths of this religion, to him new and strange. He frankly declared that he had lost faith in the religion of his childhood, and that the man-made religions about him did not seem to him either to possess vital truth, or to be founded in authority. Like the crane, he was hunting for a basis of solid knowledge, upon which his feet could be firmly planted, so that he could rise into the greater understanding of the plan of human salvation for this life and for the life to come.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ, as restored by the Prophet Joseph Smith, offers such a safe foundation for seekers after truth.—W.

ANOTHER BIRTHDAY—LEVI EDGAR YOUNG'S

THE *Star* is pleased to have the opportunity this week of congratulating another of our leaders upon the anniversary of his birth. Levi Edgar Young, one of the First Council of Seventy, was born February 2nd, 1874. From his youth his eminent gifts have been used in educational endeavours within the Church and in the universities of America. In addition to his high calling in the Church he serves as Professor of Western American History in the University of Utah. In pursuit of professional excellence he has studied at Harvard, Columbia and other leading universities, and has won academic distinction. His researches into Western American History have brought him many honours, such as the presidency of the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association and membership in many learned societies. His book, *The Founding of Utah*, has received wide acclaim.

Elder Young is a teacher of preeminent power. His classes at the University are always crowded, and his pupils declare that not only are they taught history to their full satisfaction, but they are stimulated into higher ambitions and better living by the kindly yet vigorous philosophy of life that Professor Young mingles with the facts of history.

Elder Young served as President of the Swiss-Austrian Mission during a part of his mission to Europe, 1901-1904. In October, 1909, he was chosen a member of the First Council of Seventy. His grandfather, Joseph Young, was the first member of the First Council of Seventy in this dispensation, and his father, Seymour B. Young, was for many years a member of that Council. In

pursuit of this calling Elder Young has traveled far and wide, setting in order the Quorums of Seventy in the Church.

Recently Elder Young was called to preside over the Temple Block Mission. The hundreds of thousands of tourists who visit annually the Temple Block in Salt Lake City are escorted over the grounds and through the buildings and taught the truth concerning "Mormonism" by the members of this mission. In this work Brother Young has been very successful. His pleasant and cultured personality, combined with his scholarship and wide travel, has enabled him to establish valuable and lasting friendships with visitors from all parts of the world. In this work he has been most ably assisted by his talented wife.

Levi Edgar Young is a man of sympathetic and friendly nature. He sees the good in all men, and delights to help those who are in distress. He is an appealing and convincing speaker. Those in sorrow go to him for comfort. May his days of service be increased.—W.

FIGURES AND FACTS

THE STATISTICAL REPORT of the British Mission for the year ending December 31st, 1927, appears elsewhere in this issue of the *Millennial Star*. Like time and space, statistics and figures are only relative—they have little meaning of themselves. The ideal thing would be to compare the reports of former years with the one of the year just past, but this is not possible where magazine space is limited.

However, a few notable increases in the missionary activities of 1927 over those of 1926 are deserving of mention, as follows: "Answered Calls While Tracting", increase, nearly 74,000; "Invitations in While Tracting", increase, nearly 1,000; "Gospel Conversations", increase, more than 13,000; "Tracts Distributed", increase, more than 272,000; "Pamphlets Distributed", increase, more than 7,000; "Copies of Book of Mormon Distributed", increase, nearly 450, more than one-third; "Meetings Held by Missionaries", increase, more than 260.

The decrease in "Total Hours Work" may be attributed largely to a small decrease in the average missionary force during 1927. The decrease in "Other Books Distributed" may be accounted for by the greater effort that has been expended in Book of Mormon distribution.

Although there were fewer baptisms in 1927 than in 1926, recent reports given by District Presidents at the conference held in Liverpool indicate that the number of inquirers who have already applied for baptism will more than make up that difference. One year's labour frequently lays the foundation for the next year's increase.

Reports are necessary, but at best they are incomplete. More important than figures to be remembered by members and missionaries is this: The work of the Lord is progressing; there are still many people in these lands who are waiting for the gospel message, and regardless of high or low figures on report blanks, if time, talents and opportunities have been used to best advantage, if the labour has been diligent in fact, then the offering will be acceptable to the Lord.—Richard L. Evans.

"SEASON'S GREETINGS"

The time of year has just passed when all Christendom wishes one another "The Season's Greetings." For a space of days, mayhap a week at most, all people who profess any degree of adherence to Christian faith hold in their hearts only good feeling and well-wishes for their fellows.

Alas! the "Season", so-called, is so very, very brief! Why may not the period of time when the Christ Spirit fills the hearts of men be extended into months until each is willing the whole year round to see only the good that is in his brother?

Those who understand and who live the Gospel taught by the Saviour of mankind may and do possess an all-year lease of His Spirit, which fills them with love and charity for all their fellowmen.

May not this be the test of an actual adherence to Christian faith: How long is my Season of Good-will? Is it a week, a month, or does it last from year's beginning to year's end?—Leah D. Widtsoe.

BOOK OF MORMON STUDIES*

A Test of the Genuineness of the Engravings: The first man who gave material assistance to the Prophet in the difficult task of translation, as we have noted, was Martin Harris. He not only advanced money as it was needed, but gave of his time in the necessary work of writing down the translation as it fell from the Prophet's lips. Martin was a generous man, but of doubting disposition. His wife was unconvinced of the genuineness of the record and repeatedly begged her husband to bring home some of the work so that she and their friends could see what he was doing. Through her persistent fault-finding, and her insistent demand that she be shown the records, she caused her husband, and the Prophet as well, much annoyance.

"Martin's faith was not very strong, and he desired to make a

*Lesson 4 of the Relief Society Course of Study—for use on the second lesson night in February.

test of the truthfulness of the record which Joseph had found. The Prophet had copied some of the characters from the plates on sheets of paper, some of them accompanied by the translation. Harris asked that he might take these, and his request was granted. Proceeding to New York City, Martin Harris showed these writings to a learned linguist, Professor Charles Anthon, asking his opinion of them."* Martin's description of the visit follows:

I went to the city of New York, and presented the characters which had been translated, with the translation thereof, to Professor Charles Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments. Professor Anthon stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian. I then showed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac, and Arabic; and he said they were true characters. He gave me a certificate, certifying to the people of Palmyra that they were true characters, and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct. I took the certificate and put it into my pocket, and was just leaving the house, when Mr. Anthon called me back, and asked me how the young man found out that there were gold plates in the place where he found them. I answered that an angel of God had revealed it unto him.

He then said to me: "Let me see that certificate." I accordingly took it out of my pocket and gave it to him, when he took it and tore it to pieces, saying, that there was no such thing now as ministering of angels, and that if I would bring the plates to him, he would translate them. I informed him that part of the plates were sealed, and that I was forbidden to bring them. He replied: "I cannot read a sealed book." I left him and went to Dr. Mitchell, who sanctioned what Professor Anthon had said respecting both the characters and translation.†

This testimony seems to have convinced Martin Harris, for as a result he offered his services to the Prophet to assist him in any way possible.

Scribes in the Translation: "The work of translation proceeded rather slowly, Martin Harris acting as scribe and writing from the Prophet's dictation. It is impracticable here to enter into all the details of this labour. During the progress of the work Martin brought very deep trouble upon both himself and Joseph by allowing the first one hundred and sixteen pages of manuscript to be lost. It fell into the hands of enemies of the work, thus necessitating the translating of a corresponding portion of the 'smaller plates' as a substitute for the lost manuscript. As a result of Martin's carelessness the instruments of translation were taken away for a time, and it seemed that Joseph would lose his calling. By his sincere repentance he regained the favour of God, although his error cost him great sorrow and much additional labour.

*Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets, December 1890.

†*History of the Church*, Vol. I., page 20.

Martin Harris, however, was never permitted to be his scribe again. His place was filled temporarily by Emma, the wife of Joseph, but she was so bowed down with sorrow for the death of her babe that she could render but little assistance."*

There were other times when the Prophet's friends could not assist him; at these times his wife acted as scribe. Thus was womanhood honoured in this striking example of woman proving herself a real help meet for her husband.

The Prophet's joy upon being allowed again to possess and use the Holy Interpreters is told in his own words:

> After the angel left me I continued my supplications to God, without cessation, and on the twenty-second of September, I had the joy and satisfaction of again receiving the Urim and Thummim, with which I have again commenced translating, and Emma writes for me, but the angel said that the Lord would send me a scribe, and I trust his promise will be verified. The angel seemed pleased with me when he gave me back the Urim and Thummim, and he told me that the Lord loved me, for my faithfulness and humility.†

The promised scribe spoken of came to him from an unexpected source. "It was at this time that Oliver Cowdery, a young school teacher who had received a testimony of the divinity of Joseph's mission, came and offered to act as a scribe. This offer was most willingly accepted, and the work of translation was resumed April 7th, 1829."‡

The translation was done with great difficulty. Mobs continued to hound and persecute the young men and at times the work had to be suspended while they were forced to move from place to place. Only the power of God protected the sacred record from evil and designing men, and made possible the completion of the translation. The powers of evil from that day have been arrayed against the Book of Mormon and its message, but as needed, these evil designs have been frustrated.

The Translation is Finished: Oliver continued to act as scribe until the work was completed. For a time they remained in the home of Mr. Hale, the Prophet's father-in-law, who proved himself a valiant friend in time of need. But in a miraculous manner it was made known unto Joseph that wicked men sought his life and that he should remove the plates to the home of David Whitmer and continue the work there. In an equally miraculous manner the Whitmers were convinced that they should give shelter to the young men and offered them the hospitality of their home.

"The young men and Emma Smith were treated with the utmost kindness, not only by the Whitmer family, but also by the

*Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets, December 1890.

†*History of the Prophet Joseph*, by Lucy Smith, pp. 125-6.

‡Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets, December 1890.

neighbours. Here they found many who, instead of opposing them, were eager to listen to their testimonies of the truth. When, in writing, Oliver's hand became weary, David, or John, or Peter Whitmer, Jr., or Emma would take the pen. Thus the translation went on till the work was ready for the press."*

Oliver Cowdery was commissioned by the Prophet to make a complete copy of the entire manuscript, which he did and of which he later said:

I wrote with my own pen the entire Book of Mormon (save a few pages), as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as he translated by the gift and power of God, by the means of the Urim and Thummim, or, as it is called by that book, "Holy Interpreters."†

QUESTIONS

1. Read the following scripture: Daniel 12: 4-9; Revelation 5: 1-9; II Nephi, Chapter 27.
2. Describe the manner of fulfilment of the above scripture.
3. What type of man would you judge Martin Harris to be? How did he assist the Prophet at this time?
4. How did Martin Harris cause the Prophet sorrow and great difficulty?
5. Of the two women mentioned in the lesson which one set the example all women should follow? How did she set this example? Whose example should be shunned by all women? Why?
6. What evidence have you that this translation was made by the gift and power of God?

**One Hundred Years of Mormonism*, p. 66.
†*New Witnesses for God*, Vol. II., B. H. Roberts, Chapter 7.

DEATH

TOMBLING—Sister Mary H. Tombling of North Elmham, Norwich District, passed away on January 14th at the age of ninety-two. Sister Tombling had been a faithful member of the Church since her baptism in 1909.

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